

**DEPARTMENT OF BOATING AND WATERWAYS**

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*Sent via electronic mail: Hard copy to follow*

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Delta Protection Commission  
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Subject: Comments on August 9, 2011 Draft Economic Sustainability Plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta

Dear Commissioners:

The Department of Boating and Waterways has reviewed the August 9, 2011 draft of the Economic Sustainability Plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (ESP). The Department offers the following comments and suggestions:

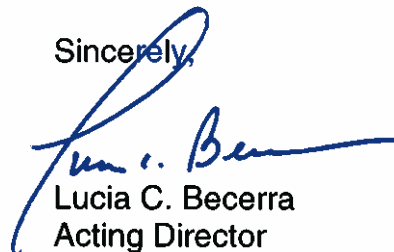
- Recent research by the Department indicates that non-motorized boating is increasing rapidly in California even as the growth of motorized boating has slowed. The Department's March 2009 report *Non-Motorized Boating in California* includes important boater survey results, statistics and trends ([http://www.dbw.ca.gov/Reports/N-M\\_Boating.aspx](http://www.dbw.ca.gov/Reports/N-M_Boating.aspx)). Specifically, the findings of this report and/or the trend toward increased non-motorized boating could be referenced in the following areas of the ESP:
  - Executive Summary, Delta Recreation and Tourism, page v, paragraph 5
  - Section 3.2.4.3, State Registration and License Numbers, Registered Vessels
  - Section 3.6, Trends, page 136, paragraph 3
  - Section 3.7, Key Findings, page 138, bullet 2
- Through the efforts of the Boating Clean and Green Campaign administered by the Department and the California Coastal Commission with the assistance of several other public and private partners, Delta marinas provide a number of used oil collection centers and recycling centers for used oil, batteries, and fishing line. This information could be referenced in:
  - Section 3.2.1.2, Private Facilities, page 111, paragraph 1
  - Section 4.2, Principles and Goals, page 143, bullet 7

- Brannan Island SRA facilities include a boat launch ramp, sewage/bilge pumpouts, non-motorized boat access, a swimming area, and berths and tie-ups for transient boats. This information should be added to Section 3.2.1.3, Public Facilities, page 116, paragraph 1.
- Additionally, Public Facilities in the Delta include Antioch Marina (restaurant, retail stores, transient boat berths and tie-ups, fuel dock, oil collection, more), Antioch Public Launch Ramp, Delta Meadows Boat Ramp, Cosumnes River Preserve Boating Access, Franks Tract SRA, Georgiana Slough, Garcia Bend Park Launch Ramp, Louis Park Boat Launching Facility, Morelli Park Boat Launching Facility, Sandy Beach Park and Boat Launch Facility, and more.
- In Section 3.2.1.5, Physical Constraints:
  - Invasive aquatic plants congest waterways, negatively affect water quality, destroy wildlife habitat, and clog water supply pumps.
  - Waterway obstructions include abandoned vessels, submerged lands, and siltation.
  - In the Water Gates, Screens, and Barriers subsection, regarding the Two-Gates project (page 118, paragraph 5), it is important to note that the proposed gates would be closed at all times during certain times of the year and that the two affected waterways would be Old River and Connection Slough, which are both widely used thoroughfares for boaters. This could impact recreation in the Delta.
  - In regard to the Invasive Aquatic Vegetation subsection:
    - Pursuant to Harbors and Navigation Code Section 64, the Department is the lead agency for the purpose of cooperating with other public agencies in *controlling* *Egeria densa* and water hyacinth, specifically in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, its tributaries, and the marsh.
    - The Department of Food and Agriculture, which has primary responsibility for invasive species programs in the state, is also trying to control water hyacinth using the water hyacinth leaf hopper as a biological control agent.
    - Additionally, there are many native aquatic plants that can and do cause problems similar to those caused by nonnative plants.
  - In the Waterway Obstructions subsection:
    - Please reference that local assistance funding for removal of abandoned recreational vessels and other navigational hazards is provided by the state through the Department's Abandoned Watercraft Abatement Fund (AWAF) grant program.
    - Also, CalRecycle has recently partnered with local and federal agencies to remove some abandoned commercial vessels that pose(d) hazards in Delta waterways.

- In the Water Quality subsection, boater surveys are mentioned. The Department has recently published a new statewide boater survey, the *2007 – 2009 California Boater Survey Final Report*, which covers many topics including water quality. Based on this survey of 5,735 boaters statewide, only 15-19% of boaters were aware that 51-75% of California drinking water comes from the Delta. This report can be found at [http://www.coastal.ca.gov/ccbn/FinalCABoatersReport\\_July2011\\_DG.pdf](http://www.coastal.ca.gov/ccbn/FinalCABoatersReport_July2011_DG.pdf).
- In Section 3.3, Existing Operational Condition:
  - Paragraph 2 talks about law enforcement on Delta waterways and states, "...when one responsible entity manages water recreation use, basic rules and regulations can be established to avoid conflicts." It does not appear that the ESP is recommending that a single entity assume control of law enforcement in the Delta. As such, it is not clear why this statement is included in the plan.
  - Paragraph 3 states, "Clear signage, however, does not deter those who desire to use a specific area." This statement seems overbroad. Surely clear signage deters some people who desire to use a specific area.
  - Paragraph 6 refers to a "...lack of public funding for law enforcement and operations and maintenance of public facilities." The Department provides millions in annual funding to local agencies for boating law enforcement.
- Section 3.4.1, Defining Market Area, refers to *The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Boating Needs Assessment* as the most recent survey of Delta recreationists. You may also find that the more recent *2007 – 2009 California Boater Survey Final Report* referenced above could augment market area data.
- Lastly, in Section 4.2, Principles and Goals, page 143, bullet 10, it would be helpful to specify that additional on-shore access facilities such as boat launches could be for motorized and non-motorized boats, since such facility features and costs can vary significantly.

The Department of Boating and Waterways appreciates this opportunity to comment on the draft ESP.

Sincerely,



Lucia C. Becerra  
Acting Director

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